

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE

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10 March 1976

The Honorable John O. Marsh, Jr.  
Counsellor to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Jack:

As the Committee on Foreign Intelligence proceeds to make good on the charge given it under terms of Executive Order 11905, it would be most helpful to me and the members of the Committee to have in hand your Staff's understandings and interpretations of some of the responsibilities outlined in the Order.

In particular, it would be helpful to have any elaboration of the CFI's responsibility to "establish policy priorities for the collection and production of national intelligence" and to "establish policy for the management of the National Foreign Intelligence Program."

We are at the moment engaged in the CFI in defining the nature of the programs for which the Committee will be responsible and in developing processes by which the work can be accomplished. CFI deliberations will be materially aided by elaborations or annotations from you and your Staff on these and any other points set forth in the Executive Order.

Sincerely,

*- suggested reply attached*

George Bush  
Chairman

*I am told, agree with  
the substance of the attached draft.  
If OK I'd like to have this before noon*

*tomorrow*

Dear George:

*never signed*

In response to your request of 10 March, and to be helpful to the Committee on Foreign Intelligence, I herewith provide you with elaboration of points made in Executive Order 11905.

First, it was the clear intent that the CFI would not in any way become involved in the production of national intelligence, a responsibility considered to be yours as Director of Central Intelligence and principal intelligence adviser to the President. The CFI role was seen to be one of addressing and controlling resource issues involved in national intelligence programs and in issuing guidance to the Intelligence Community as the Committee from time to time may see fit.

In charging the CFI with the responsibility to "establish policy priorities for the collection and production of national intelligence," the intent is to permit the CFI to issue guidance to the Intelligence Community, annually or more frequently, concerning major international problems, current and future, and a description of the priority needs for intelligence information related to those problems. (It will be up to you and whatever boards or committees you may choose to organize to replace USIB to further elaborate the priority needs by developing intelligence requirements to be matched against the various collection systems.) This charge to the CFI can also be construed as advising the Community on the mix of resources to be devoted to national intelligence activities, particularly to insure a good and proper balance among collection, processing, analysis and production efforts.

The charge to the CFI to "establish policy for the management of the NFIP" is also permissive in nature. The formulations employed in the Order allow the CFI to issue budget guidance; they allow the CFI to state priority needs and particular areas for concentration of intelligence activities and assets; they allow the issuance of advice and guidance aimed at such diverse subjects, for example, as how the Community or one of its components might enhance the career development of its personnel or how it might encourage external contracting or other initiatives aimed at solving one Community problem or another.

I hope this is helpful to you and your associates on the Committee.

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE



per our phone  
conversation

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Written by  
E. H. Knoche  
for  
Director Bush



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